

Message Text

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P R 172201Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY
INFO AMCONSUL ZAGREB

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, YO

SUBJECT: U.S.-YUGOSLAV ECONOMIC WORKING GROUPS

REF: BELGRADE 5855

1. YUGOSLAV EMBASSY ECONOMIC COUNSELOR VISITED COMMERCE ON AUGUST 15 AND CONFIRMED THAT FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECRETARIAT HAD NOT APPROVED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR ECONOMIC WORKING GROUPS. HE BELIEVES THAT THIS IS ONLY BUREAUCRATIC PROBLEM DUE TO PERSONNEL CHANGES AND AUGUST VACATION PERIOD.

2. GIVEN THE UNCERTAINTY THAT YUGOSLAVS WILL MAKE DECISION ON TERMS OF REFERENCE IN TIME, WE SEE NO REASON TO PUSH AHEAD WITH PREVIOUS PLANS FOR WASHINGTON SESSION OF FULL WORKING GROUP. IT WOULD BE AWKWARD TO POSTPONE SESSION
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AFTER PREPARATIONS HAD REACHED ADVANCED STAGE, AND WE WOULD FACE EMBARRASSMENT VIS-A-VIS U.S. BUSINESSMEN INVITED TO ATTEND.

3. UNLESS EMBASSY CONSIDERS IT IMPORTANT THAT, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, A FORMAL MEETING TAKE PLACE BEFORE ASSISTANT SECRETARY WEIL'S VISIT TO YUGOSLAVIA, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD

BE BETTER TO MOVE THE MEETING BACK TO A LATER DATE. IN

ITS PLACE, A SMALL INFORMAL MEETING BETWEEN ASSISTANT SECRETARY WEIL AND AMBASSADOR BELOVSKI, ATTENDED BY OTHER COMMERCE AND STATE REPRESENTATIVES AND POSSIBLY U.S.-YUGOSLAV ECONOMIC COUNCIL PRESIDENT WALKER, COULD BE ARRANGED. THIS WOULD AVOID PLACING EXAGGERATED IMPORTANCE ON RAPID APPROVAL OF TERMS OF REFERENCE WHILE ALSO SATISFYING BELOVSKI'S DESIRE TO MOVE FORWARD IN WORKING GROUPS AND HAVE PART OF THE ACTION HERE.

4. WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR VIEWS. VANCE

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